

The Institute has never expressed any opinion in favor of secularisation; and its action on the Clergy Reserves has been limited to this—It has prayed, that, if secularised, the funds thence accruing may not be used for the overthrow of the Catholic School system of Upper Canada; and that, if the said funds be declared public property, and distributed as such amongst the Municipalities, Catholic schools may be entitled to share equally with Protestant schools, in the proceeds. This petition originated, not in any hostility to Anglicanism, but in a tender regard for the rights and interests of Catholicity.

We can heartily reciprocate Dr. Strachan's wishes for peace and good will betwixt Catholics and Protestants. At the present moment, when Christian and Mahometan soldiers are fighting in the same ranks, and for the same cause, it would be absurd to deny the possibility of a friendly co-operation betwixt Catholics and Protestants for political objects. In religion indeed, Catholics have as little in common with Protestants or Non-Catholics, as with Mahometans. Yet this does not imply the necessity of enmity, or the impossibility of co-operation for political purposes, betwixt Catholics—and Non-Catholics, whether, Mahometans or Protestants. And when, as in the question of the inviolability of ecclesiastical endowments made by a competent authority—and we have yet to learn that the authority which set aside the Clergy Reserves for ecclesiastical purposes was not competent—the interests of Catholics and Non-Catholics are identical, it would be as foolish as it would be uncharitable for them to allow their religious differences to prevent a political union, or to interfere with the ordinary intercourse of life and the mutual interchange of good offices. Anglicans indeed call us idolaters, and denounce the most sacred offices of our religion as a damnable idolatry; but we trust that they put a non-natural interpretation upon this, as upon many other articles of their creed.

On the question of Secularisation we have so often expressed our opinion, that it is needless for us to say more than, that our opinion has never altered; that we know no cause why Catholics should lend their aid to the destruction of Protestant endowments; but that we know of a thousand why they should not. The thing however is done; and bitterly will Catholics rue the suicidal policy which they have pursued. We do not say that the Church will suffer, for she is God's Church, and He can sustain His Church without the help, and against the malice, of man. But that there will be much individual suffering in consequence—that as Dr. Strachan says, the spoliation of Protestant endowments will be followed up by the spoliation of Catholic endowments—that tithes, ecclesiastical corporations, convents and Catholic asylums are destined to share the fate of the Clergy Reserves—and that in consequence, religion will languish in our rural parishes, and that, strip of their property left to them by charitable founders, our educational establishments will be destroyed, and our convents—the sole barriers which exist against pauperism—will be deprived of the means of succoring the unprotected—are events of which no sane person can reasonably doubt. No man, not altogether an idiot, but what knows that the secularisation of the Reserves is looked upon, and advocated, by the greater part of Protestants, as the means whereby they shall be enabled to spoil the Catholic Church of all her revenues. That Catholics should have been aiding and abetting in such a monstrous policy must indeed be a subject of regret to every one who loves the Church, and would fain see her influence extended and perpetuated.

But regrets are vain. The fatal policy has been consummated; and Catholics have, by voting for the second reading of Mr. McDonald's Bill, ratified the principle that it is desirable to abolish, even to the very semblance of connection between Church and State. It is too late for them now to retrace their steps—or to seek to explain away the meaning of their votes. They may make themselves ridiculous by their inconsistency, but they cannot hope to avert the consequences of their folly. We say folly, to avoid using a harsher expression.

Unheeded amidst the din of contending nations, or noticed only with a sneer by the Protestant press, as an event of no interest, the Prelates of Christendom are about to assemble in the Eternal City, under the guidance of Him who has promised to be with His Church "all days." What topics will principally engage their attention, we are not yet informed; but it is generally expected that the decree so long anxiously looked for, and ardently desired by the Catholic Church, propounding the "Immaculate Conception" of her whom all generations have called, and to the end shall call Blessed, as an article of Faith, will be given to the world.

It is not for us to anticipate; neither would it be decent for us to speculate as to the decision upon this momentous question, to which the Fathers of the Church will arrive. But, in answer to an objection repeatedly urged by the Non-Catholic world, we would remark that, in propounding the "Immaculate Conception" of the Mother of God as an article of Faith, the Church will propound no new thing; but will merely give her authoritative sanction to a belief very generally prevalent in the Church from the beginning—and which though it may have been sometimes contested in the Schools, has always met with a ready acceptance in the hearts of the simple faithful. That the Virgin Mary was free from all actual sin has ever been believed; but on the question of her Conception, two opinions have been put forth. One, the more generally held, that the curse pronounced on Adam and his descendants was by a peculiar grace raised in favor of the Blessed Virgin, who, was therefore "Conceived Immaculate," free from all taint of original sin, pure as was Adam ere he by transgression fell. The other, that the Mother of

Christ was conceived, subject indeed to the general law, but, immediately after conception, was cleansed by the special and extraordinary action of divine grace. Some great names may be quoted in favor of the latter opinion; but the former, though not pronounced as of faith, has always been viewed with the greater favor by the Catholic Church, whilst the other, though not formally condemned, has been as generally discountenanced. Thus, the Church has long tolerated the celebration of the Festival of the "Immaculate Conception," but has prohibited the teaching of doctrines contrary to the doctrine therein implied.

Now, as at the Council of Nice, the Church in declaring the Consubstantiality of the Son to the Father, propounded no new doctrine, but merely declared authoritatively what had been the faith upon that point from the beginning—so will it be with the "Immaculate Conception." The Church will simply declare, after patient and minute investigation, what is, and has been, her belief upon the Conception of the Virgin Mary. She does not pretend to have received any new revelation, not contained in the original depositum committed to her keeping; and in pronouncing her decree, she will but declare, "Thus has it been handed down to us, thus do we hold it."

We do not pretend to go into the evidences in favor of the doctrine of the "Immaculate Conception," but this we may be permitted to say, that the most cursory perusal of ecclesiastical history must convince us of its antiquity. In every age of the Church it has been asserted, both in the Greek and Latin Churches; and perhaps its most eloquent and illustrious defenders are to be found amongst the Doctors of the East. The stream of tradition can be traced from the present day, to the first centuries of Christianity, ere the corruptions of Rome had commenced, or the bright sun which rose at Jerusalem had been dimmed with a passing cloud.

If we commence with the Council of Trent, we find the Fathers of that great Council expressly exempting the Blessed Virgin from their decree on "Original Sin."—*Sess. V., de peccato originali*. At the Council of Basle, the doctrine of the "Immaculate Conception" was declared to be "conformable to ecclesiastical worship, Catholic faith, right reason, and holy Scripture"—*Sess. 21*; and throughout the Middle Ages, the zeal with which this doctrine was asserted, and the little countenance with which its opposite was received, are conclusive as to the opinions generally held during the "Ages of Faith."

If we consult the records of a still higher antiquity, the answer is still the same. We have the testimony of a St. Augustine, St. Jerome, St. Cyprian in the West; in the East, the voice of the Fathers is almost unanimous. St. John Chrysostom, speaking of the signification of that Eden, or "place of delights," in which Adam was placed, expressly says that it was a type of the Blessed Virgin—*Serm. 2, de mat. nom.*; thus giving us to understand that, in her purity, the Virgin resembled the earth ere yet, for the sin of man, the curse had been pronounced upon it. We might quote too, the writings of many of the Eastern Fathers, in which the same doctrine of the "Immaculate Conception," is clearly asserted.

Nor is it in the writings and traditions of Christianity alone, that we find unmistakeable evidences of the high antiquity, and general prevalence of the belief in the "Immaculate Conception." If these were silent, if the witnesses of the Gospel held their peace, the very stones would cry out and bear their testimony. Long ere the rise of Mahomedanism, the tradition was known to, and accepted by, the idolaters of the Arabian peninsula, who must have received it from their Christian neighbors. The tradition was old in the days of the prophet of Islam, and so firmly rooted in the hearts of his countrymen that he was fain to embody it in the *Koran*. In the chapter on "Mary and the Messiah," we read—"It is said in the traditions, 'No child is born but the devil hath touched it at the time of its birth—wherefore it first raiseth its voice by crying—excepting Mary and her Son.'" The *Koran* is indeed no witness as to the truth of the doctrine; but it may be accepted as valid testimony as to its great antiquity, and universal acceptance; and it is its antiquity, not its truth, that we undertook to establish.

We had written a few words in reply to an attack in the *Montreal Freeman* of Saturday last: but subsequent events have rendered their insertion unnecessary. The *Montreal Freeman* has breathed his last; and it is not for us to disturb the repose, or to insult the ashes, of the dead.—May he rest in peace.

In vindication however, of the correctness of our views respecting the entirely accidental nature of the Enniskillen Rail-Road catastrophe, we may be permitted to appeal to the testimony of the Catholic press of Ireland, who have clearly established these facts. 1. That the engines did not come into collision with stones, or with any other obstructions, on the line of rails. 2. That the rate at which the cars were going at the time when the accident occurred—the intoxicated state of the drivers and of the greater part of the excursionists—the sharp curve of the road, along which they were dashing at a rapid pace—and the bursting asunder of the rails consequent upon the rupture of the "tie-rods"—are all, or any of them, amply sufficient to account for the catastrophe, without recurring to the hypothesis of stones half a ton weight, placed on the road by blood-thirsty Irish Papists. As yet, we say, there is not the slightest shadow of evidence to justify the Orange press of Ireland or Canada, in their mendacious slanders against Catholics and Irishmen; nor to warrant the assumption of "a diabolical attempt at wholesale murder." "All this general accusation" against Catholics," says the *Dublin Weekly Telegraph*, "rests upon an accusation the accuracy of which has

not yet been proved." And our Irish cotemporary significantly asks:—

"When were the stones placed on the railway? Before the accident or after it. In the one case, there was a diabolical attempt to deprive persons in an excursion train of existence; in the latter case, there has been an equally diabolical attempt to cast an unjust imputation, not merely upon individuals, but upon an entire community! The former is not consistent with the conduct of Catholics; the latter is consistent with many preceding notorious attempts to cast unjust imputations upon the character of the Catholic population of Ireland; and the last of such attempts is that of a no-Popery parson, who was discovered in the neighborhood of Dublin a few years ago, breaking the panes of glass in his own drawing-room windows, for the purpose of showing he was persecuted by the Catholic peasantry!"—*Dublin Weekly Telegraph*.

On Wednesday last, the *Freeman*, with whom we have now done forever, notified the world that, with his issue of the 1st inst., his mortal career terminated, and that he was to be succeeded by a new tri-weekly journal—under the title of the *Argus*—edited by Mr. Bristow, late of the *Pilot*, and well known to the Canadian public for his talent as a political writer, and his knowledge of Canadian politics. The Prospect which ushers in our new cotemporary is a masterly document, but too violently and exclusively political for the *True Witness* to notice. The *Argus* is opposition, and strongly condemns the present Coalition Ministry. If we cannot endorse all its political opinions, we may at least be permitted to wish it long life and prosperity.

SEPARATE SCHOOLS.—The Anglicans of Upper Canada are agitating for separate schools; and in one of their meetings have adopted a petition to the Legislature, protesting against being confounded with other Protestant sects—"as amongst them are found many who deny the very fundamental principle of revealed religion"—and praying for the same privileges, with respect to separate schools, as are enjoyed by their Catholic fellow-subjects. This prayer is reasonable and just. If Anglicans have conscientious scruples against the common school system, founded on the principles of their religion, the State has no right to tax them for schools of which they cannot take advantage; and Anglicans have just as good a right to demand separate schools as have Catholics. We trust therefore that the latter will give their hearty support to the petition of the Anglican Synod. Equality, as before the Law, for all denominations, is our motto. Not an equality of oppression, but an equality of liberty. "Free Schools—Freedom of Education"—and "No State-Schoolism," should be our cry.

We learn from the *Bangor Mercury* that the outrage upon the Rev. Mr. Bapst was not the result of a sudden outburst of passion, but of a deliberately formed design to put down Popery, fully discussed, and agreed upon, at a large Protestant meeting, regularly called in the town of Ellsworth, and whose proceedings were published by the Protestant press. The report that the Rev. Mr. Bapst had died in consequence of the cruelties practised upon him is, we are happy to say, contradicted.

As a proof of the sympathy, which, with a few honorable exceptions, is felt by the Protestants of America for the actors in this cowardly outrage upon a priest, we need only give the following paragraph, which we copy from one of our exchanges:—

"THE ELLSWORTH OUTRAGE.—The Grand Jury have refused to sanction the Bills of Indictments against seven of the mob, who assaulted the Rev. Mr. Bapst, the Catholic Priest."

Be it remembered that the Rev. Mr. Bapst distinctly recognised the perpetrators of the attack upon him; and that the refusal of the Grand Jury to sanction the Bills of Indictment, proceeded, not from any doubts as to the identity of the persons accused, but solely from their warm Protestant sympathies with the accused. An assault on a Romish Priest, a Jesuit into the bargain, is a Protest against Popery which Protestants generally, are not likely to disapprove of. Of course there are some few exceptions, and we are happy to say that there have been some even in the vicinity of Ellsworth:—

"A number of influential Protestant citizens of Bangor have presented the Rev. John Bapst, with an elegant gold hunting, chain and seal, of the value of about \$50, to prove to the injured gentleman that they are 'unwilling to see any man proscribed for worshipping God according to the dictates of his own conscience.' This privilege they claim, and desire to extend it to all others. The recipient acknowledged the testimonial in a very well written letter."—*American Paper*.

An account of a fearful Rail-Road catastrophe in the United States will be found on our sixth page. The loss of life has been immense. Forty-seven had been killed outright, and upwards of forty dangerously wounded, of whom it is feared that many will not recover. This accident is evidently entirely attributable to the culpable mismanagement of the Rail-Road Company. In the States, as long as they can escape punishment, these Companies seem to care as little for human life, as for the life of a dog. No good will be done with them until two or three of the Directors are hung.

Dr. Brownson was on the cars, and our readers will be happy to learn, that he escaped uninjured. The learned gentleman, together with Mr. F. Meagher, is mentioned as having been very active in rendering assistance to his wounded fellow-travellers.

OUR NEW GOVERNOR GENERAL.—The *Quebec Mercury* says, on Saturday last:—Sir Edmund Head will arrive here from New York towards the close of next week. It is said that Lord Elgin will leave for Europe by the Cunard steamer from Boston on the 14th November. We understand that His Excellency intends giving a grand public Ball before his departure.

OUTRAGE.—We are very sorry to learn that on Thursday evening the windows of the Rev. Mr. Lonsdell's house in Laprairie were broken by some miscreants. This seems only part of a regular system of outrages, the windows of the Church of England Chapel in that village where Mr. L. officiates having been repeatedly broken, and attempts made, since they have been closed with shutters, to wrench them off in order to demolish the windows. We still more regret to learn that the authorities of the village, though applied to, have taken no effective steps to detect and arrest the perpetrators of these disgraceful acts or to prevent their repetition. Such supineness on their part will there is reason to apprehend, lead to retaliation.—*Montreal Herald*, Oct. 30.

As the Rev. Mr. Lonsdell is well known, and respected in the village of Laprairie, for his consistent liberality towards all his neighbors, these outrages cannot, we think, be put down to religious animosity. But what are the police about that the rowdy ruffians who commit them are not handed over to justice?

To the Editor of the *True Witness*.

Quebec, 27th October, 1854.

DEAR SIR—I copy at foot a petition for a Grant in favor of a Convent of the Ladies of the Presentation, in the town of Sherbrooke; because it presents a most pleasing contrast between the generous conduct of the Protestants of that locality, and the disgraceful bigotry of Brown and other Protestants in Upper Canada and the United States.

The first signer of this petition is Edward Short, Resident Judge, and son of an English minister.—He was educated at Three Rivers, and is a highly honorable person, as his behaviour on this occasion shews. Many of the other signers are Protestants.—The second signature is that of John Short, Advocate, the Judge's brother. I believe this a fair opportunity for you to make some remarks, contrasting the handsome conduct of these men with that of others.

Yours sincerely,

LAICUS.

"TO THE HONORABLE THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE PROVINCE OF CANADA."

"The Petition of the undersigned Inhabitants of the Town of Sherbrooke and vicinity,

"RESPECTFULLY SHewETH—

"That, feeling the necessity of having a school for females established in the said town of Sherbrooke, divers inhabitants thereof entered into a subscription for the purpose of constructing a Convent, where the Ladies of the Order of the Presentation might keep a girl's school.

"That, by these means, a large and expensive plot of ground was bought; and many generous inhabitants, and your petitioners, have subscribed towards the construction of the necessary buildings; and that, nevertheless, a sufficient amount for the completion of them has not yet been collected.

"That, under these circumstances, your petitioners pray that your Honorable House will grant the sum of one thousand pounds, as an aid towards the building of a female school, to be kept by the Ladies of the said Order.

"(Signed)

"E. SHORT,
"J. SHORT,
"W. D. RITCHIE,
"JOHN ELTON."
And others.

We have received from Messrs. Lovel, the 5th volume of Mr. Christie's History of Canada, giving minute particulars of the disturbances of '37 and '38.

The Quebec correspondent of the *British Colonist* tells the following excellent story of Dr. Ryerson:—

Dr. Ryerson, once upon a time, was a very clever, and, I believe, a very honest Methodist preacher. It was when taverns were scarce in Upper Canada, if indeed a Methodist preacher ever had occasion to stop at one. However, whether he was a guest or a traveller on the occasion I am about alluding to, I know not; nor is it necessary to my purpose to enquire further, than that a Quaker was his companion, and that the house they stopped at had one available bed. Not liking to travel further and perhaps far worse, they consented to sleep together, and went up to bed. The Quaker turned in first, and the Doctor, as became his calling, knelt down and made a most vociferous and eloquent prayer, in which he accused himself of all sorts of unworthiness, and laid to his own charge certain magnitudinous sins of omission as well as commission. At length he concluded, and prepared to turn in too, when the Quaker rose up and delivered himself thus:—

"Friend Ryerson, if thee art as great a sinner as thee hast told the Lord thee art—and it is not likely thee hast told Him a lie—thee shalt not sleep with me."

ANOTHER RAILROAD ACCIDENT—20 LIVES LOST.—We learn from the *Detroit Tribune*, that on Friday night last, an accident occurred on the Lake shore road near Toledo, by which 20 lives were lost.—*Hamilton Gazette*.

The *Quebec Mercury* states that, to judge by appearance, it is the intention of the Richmond Railway Company not to carry either passengers or mails this year. The Chaudiere bridge is not finished, the ballasting of the line is not completed, and the station houses at the Point Levi terminus are not roofed in.

ARREST OF 27 RIOTERS—EXTRAORDINARY AND TURBULENT CONDUCT OF THEIR ALLEGED LEADER, IN THE POST OFFICE.—This morning twenty-seven persons were brought before R. G. Belleau, Esq., J.P., at the Police Court, on charge of riot and assault, with intent to murder, being the parties better known to the public as the men who attacked the Montmorency election procession, as it came through St. Roch's on the triumphant return of Mr. Cauchon, M.P.P. The accused, all French Canadians, are unknown to the public save Messrs. Town Councillor Rheanno, and Mr. Oullet, Notary. They were released on bail till Monday.—*Quebec Mercury*.

Birth.

At Quebec, on the 26th ult., the wife of Mr. J. O'Leary, of a son.